

REMARKS:

In the foregoing amendments, claims 1-5 were canceled, and claims 6-12 were added to the application. While the Official action only included a discussion of claims 1-4, the present application contained five claims, prior to the present amendment. Claim 5 was added to the application in a preliminary amendment filed together with the application on January 18, 2002. The Official filing receipt for this application indicated that the application contained five claims, when filed.

The new claims have the following relationship to the original claims:

| <u>New Claims</u> | <u>Original Claims</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 6                 | 1                      |
| 7                 | 2                      |
| 8                 | new                    |
| 9                 | new                    |
| 10                | 3                      |
| 11                | 5                      |
| 12                | 4                      |

The Official action set forth a single rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent No. 5,714,735 of Offer. The statement of this rejection is set forth from about the middle of page 2 to about the middle of page 3 of the Official action. Applicant respectfully submits that the teachings of Offer do not disclose or suggest the invention as set forth in new claims 6-12 within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 102 or 35 U.S.C. § 103.

From simply viewing the drawings of Offer, it is apparent that these teachings are quite different than the invention set forth in applicant's claims.

In the new claims, the method steps were rewritten in order to better define the differences between the teachings of Offer and the invention described in the present application. For example, new claim 6 further defines that the welding is achieved by immediate physical irradiation of the welding portion by a laser beam from a laser source. This expression defines that the laser beam is directly applied to the welding object portion, without passing through an optical fiber that is required in Offer. For this reason, applicant respectfully submits that the teachings of Offer cannot contemplate or suggest the invention as set forth in claim 6-9.

#1

New claim 10 defines welding by weaving a laser beam, etc. While the Official action stated that the teachings of Offer include weaving a laser beam, applicant respectfully submits that this is impossible. The weaving of a laser beam in the presently claimed invention is achieved by rotating or swinging mirrors. This arrangement or movement is impossible in the structure proposed by Offer, and there is no other structure or method proposed in Offer that could accomplish weaving of a laser beam. Therefore, it is not possible for the teachings of Offer to contemplate or suggest the method set forth in claims 10-12 including weaving a laser beam.

#2

New claim 12 corresponds to original claim 4. The Official action simply stated that the relationship set forth in this claim is met by the teachings of Offer, without any explanation. Applicant respectfully submits that this is not possible. For example, claim 12 includes a perimeter "F" that is a weaving

frequency of the laser beam. Since Offer does not contemplate or suggest weaving the laser beam, it cannot contemplate or suggest a frequency of weaving the laser beam. Furthermore, the Official action did not pointed out how the teachings of Offer meet the relationship set forth in claim 12.

New claim 8 further defines that the laser beam is a focused laser beam, which is shown, for example, in Fig. 1 of the present application. Since the teachings of Offer propose at best the use of a laser through fiber optics, as discussed at column 10, lines 19-28, these teachings cannot contemplate or suggest a focused laser beam. New 9 defines that the laser beam is supplied in a direction substantially perpendicular to a welding advance direction.


Applicant respectfully submits that this arrangement is impossible in the structure proposed by Offer.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully submits that claims 6-12 are patentably distinguishable from the teachings of Offer. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection. For these reasons, applicant respectfully requests a formal allowance of claims 6-12.

The foregoing is believed to be a complete and proper response to the Official action mailed February 5, 2003. While it is believed that all the claims in this application are in condition for allowance, should the examiner have any comments or questions, it is respectfully requested that the undersigned be telephoned at the below listed number to resolve any outstanding issues.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, applicant hereby petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fee therefor, as well as any other fees which become due, may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 22-0256.

Respectfully submitted,  
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